

Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers (VHF)

(Ebola, Marburg, Lassa, Rift Valley, Yellow Fever, Dengue Fever, Hantavirus, Congo-Crimean, and Venezuelan Hemorrhagic fevers)

Revision 12/07/01

Missouri Dept of Health and Senior Services (800) 392-0272 (24 hour)

State Public Health Laboratory (573) 751-3334 or 751-0633

Contact the MSPHL at (573) 751-0633 prior to collecting any samples to obtain specific instructions.

The SPHL is not equipped to process any specimen for hemorrhagic fevers. All specimens will be transported to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Remember that these samples may be highly infective! Extreme caution should be taken in collecting, preparing for shipment and transporting any material suspected of being contaminated with a biological agent.

The following information is meant only as a general guideline.

Specimen collection and transport

Clinical:

Collect whole blood*, serum, tissues.

* Whole blood may be frozen. Do not centrifuge suspected VHF specimens because this increases risk to the lab worker. If serum specimens have already been prepared, these can be used. Place specimens in plastic tubes for shipping and storage and be sure that the tubes are sealed and properly labeled. Ship frozen on dry ice.

For fatal cases collect liver biopsy, skin biopsy, as well as other tissues for biopsy (spleen, lung, heart, and kidney). Biopsy specimens should be fixed in formalin and stored at room temperature (do not freeze).

Signs and Symptoms:

Within a few days of becoming infected with VHF: High fever, headache, muscle aches, stomach pain, fatigue, diarrhea, sore throat, rash, red and itchy eyes, vomiting blood, bloody diarrhea.

Within one week of becoming infected with VHF: chest pain, blindness, bleeding, shock, and death.

- **Contact Precautions for healthcare workers.**
- **Decontamination is accomplished with hypochlorite or phenolic disinfectants.**
- **Isolation measures and barrier nursing procedures are indicated.**